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Greetings Vicki Hennessy

Wednesday, December 5, 2018

POLICING & POLICY

Senators Say They've Met McConnell's Threshold For Vote On Criminal Justice Bill.

The AP (12/4, Freking) reports backers of criminal justice legislation "say they have met the threshold set by Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell for getting a vote." Senate Judiciary Chairman Grassley said at a forum sponsored by the Washington Post, that McConnell "said, 'show me the numbers. If it gets to be 65 or 70, I'll bring it up.' ... We're there." Grassley "said he now has support for the legislation from more than half of the Republicans in the chamber," and Democratic leaders "said support on their side is 'overwhelming.' If true, their projections mean at least two-thirds of the Senate would vote for the bill." However, "it remains unclear whether the legislation will receive a vote on the floor, with only a few weeks to go before a new Congress is sworn in."

The Washington Examiner (12/4, Cohen) quotes Grassley as telling the Washington Post event, "If McConnell will bring this up, it will pass overwhelmingly and he can do it in a way — several different ways — to shorten the time it would take. ... This can be done in three or four days real easily."

Australia Set To Grant Police Access To Encrypted Messages.

Bloomberg News (12/4, Scott) reports, "Australia is set to give its police and intelligence agencies the power to access encrypted messages on platforms such as WhatsApp, becoming the latest country to face down privacy concerns in the name of public safety." According to Bloomberg News, "Amid protests from companies such as Facebook Inc. and Google, the government and main opposition struck a deal on Tuesday that should see the legislation passed by parliament this week." Under the proposed legislation, "technology companies could be forced to help decrypt communications on popular messaging apps, or even build new functionality to help police access data." Prime Minister Scott Morrison "has said the legislation is needed to help foil terrorist attacks and organized crime," but "critics say it is flawed and could undermine security across the Internet, jeopardizing activities from online voting to market trading and data storage."

New York Lawmaker's Bill Would Require Police To Scrutinize Social Media Of Handgun License Applicants.

The AP (12/4, Hill) reports that New York state Sen. Kevin Parker (D) "has introduced a bill that would require police to scrutinize the social media and online searches of handgun license applicants, and disqualify those who publish violent or hate-filled posts. 'We certainly want to make sure we're putting weapons in the hands of the right people and keeping them out of the hands of the wrong people,'" Parker said, adding "he was inspired to act after the Pittsburgh synagogue shooting suspect left social media rants that Jews were 'children of Satan.'" The AP adds, "Free-speech watchdogs and even some gun-control advocates have already raised concerns about the bill, which would require handgun applicants to turn over login information to allow investigators to look at three years' worth of Facebook, Snapchat, Twitter and Instagram posts. Google, Yahoo and Bing searches over the previous year also would be checked." According to the AP, "A survey of more than 550 police departments several years ago by the International Association of Chiefs of Police found more than half use social media for listening or

monitoring and three-quarters of them use it for intelligence."

CRIME & DRUGS

New York City Sees Another Record Low For Crimes In November.

Newsday (NY) (12/4, DeStefano) reports, "New York City hit another record low for crime in November, setting up the possibility that 2018 could beat the record lows set in 2017, particularly for homicides and shootings." Newsday adds, "For the seven major crime categories such as homicide, felonious assault, burglary and robbery, New York City saw crime drop 5 percent in November, compared with the same period in 2017, making it the lowest level for November in the modern era of police record keeping, officials said Tuesday." According to Newsday, "The big drops in November were in homicides, which dipped 25 percent over the monthly total last year, followed by burglaries, which fell 15.8 percent, and robberies, which dipped 11.8 percent, the latest police data showed."

Hate Crimes In Canada Surge By 47%.

The Washington Post (12/4, Coletta) reports, "Reported hate crimes in Canada skyrocketed 47 percent last year, the highest number since comparable data first become available in 2009, according to recently released figures from Statistics Canada." According to the Post, "Law enforcement agencies reported that 2,073 hate crimes occurred in 2017, up from 1,409 in 2016, an increase fueled by incidents primarily taking place in Ontario and Quebec targeting Canada's Jewish, Muslim and black populations." The Post adds, "Although it marked the fourth consecutive year that hate crimes have increased in the country, this uptick represented the largest year-on-year jump during that period. 'Ordinarily, I would give the caveat that any increase in crime statistics could be the result of better police recording and public reporting,' said Barbara Perry, a criminology professor at the University of Ontario Institute of Technology who studies hate crimes. 'But this kind of leap means more is going on than just changes in recording behavior.'"

Man Arrested For Threatening New Hampshire Governor.

New Hampshire Public Radio (12/4) reports, "New Hampshire authorities and the FBI announced that a man was arrested today for allegedly threatening Gov. Chris Sununu, in connection with online statements targeted to the state's Jewish community." Brian Roberts, 38, of Concord, "was charged with a class A misdemeanor charge of criminal threatening, according to the New Hampshire Attorney General's office." Roberts "is charged with knowingly threatening 'to commit any crime against the person of another with a purpose to terrorize any person.'" The Attorney General "said Roberts sent an email Nov. 30 to the CIA's website, in which he stated, 'Going to shoot Gov state of NH no matter what.'" The investigation "began when CIA officials informed the Concord Police Department about the messages linked to the email account." The FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force "helped local, state and federal law enforcement investigators to identify Roberts, AG Gordon MacDonald said in the announcement."

The AP (12/4) reports that MacDonald "said on or about Nov. 30," Roberts "sent the electronic message to www.cia.gov." WBTS-TV Boston (12/4) reports, "In addition to the criminal threatening charge against Roberts, prosecutors said the investigation would determine any possible violations of New Hampshire's Civil Rights Act." Roberts is scheduled to be arraigned this morning "at the 6th Circuit Court-District Division-Concord."

Accused Atlanta-Area Drug Kingpin Faces Legal Hurdles After Two Years On The Lam.

The Morristown (TN) Citizen Tribune (12/4, Daniels) reports, "More than two years on the lam for an alleged duplicitous, Atlanta-area crystal-meth kingpin, who supplied multiple kilograms to dealers in Hamblen County, has ended, and he apparently faces impossible obstacles in mounting a credible defense, according to court documents." The Citizen Tribune adds, "After the FBI raided Harry Keilholtz's Stone Mountain Road residence in February 2016, he initially agreed to cooperate with the FBI to implicate his suppliers, Mexican nationals, according to an application for a search warrant obtained by FBI Agent Allen Pack." Keilholtz "cooperated with the FBI on one deal, and was released from custody," but "he reneged on his assurance he would implicate others and disappeared." Keilholtz, "who was severed from the 11-defendant conspiracy when he didn't show, was taken into custody in Panama City in early November."

California Woman Arrested For Suspected Embezzlement From City.

The Napa Valley (CA) Register (12/4, Glidden) reports, "An American Canyon woman was arrested Monday for allegedly stealing about $10,000 in permit fee revenues that she collected in her capacity as fire prevention secretary with the city's fire department, Vallejo City Manager Greg Nyhoff confirmed to the Times-Herald late Monday afternoon." Shirley A. Herbert, 58, of American Canyon "and a city of Vallejo employee, was booked into the Solano County jail on two felony counts of embezzlement and grand theft, according to the Vallejo Police Department and the Solano County Sheriff's online custody log." The city's former landscape manager Donald Burton "pleaded guilty in August 2017 after he was caught by Federal Bureau of Investigation surveillance trying to inflate city contracts with local landscape companies so he could receive a portion of the altered contracts."

Register now to attend the new IACP Officer Safety and Wellness Symposium, taking place February 18-19, 2019 in San Antonio, Texas. The symposium is a unique occasion for law enforcement professionals to learn from experts in the field about strategies, resources, and best practices for comprehensive officer safety and wellness.

For registration and more information, please visit www.theiacp.org/OSWSymposium. Space is limited, so register today.

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TECHNOLOGY

New York Police To Deploy Drones.

The New York Times (12/4, Southall, Winston) reports that the New York Police Department on Tuesday "unveiled plans to deploy 14" aerial drones "and to train 29 officers to operate them, opening an intense debate about whether an agency previously criticized for illegally surveilling citizens should possess such powerful technology." According to the Times, "Senior police officials said the drones would be used for monitoring giant crowds, investigating hazardous waste spills, handling hostage situations and reaching remote areas in crime scenes, among other tasks," and that "they will not be used for routine police patrols, unlawful surveillance or to enforce traffic laws, the officials said. Nor will they be equipped with weapons. 'Drone technology will give our cops and their incident commanders an opportunity to see what they're getting into before they go into harm's way,' Chief of Department Terence A. Monahan said. 'For this reason alone, it would be negligent for us not to use this technology.'"

CNN (12/4, Simon) reports, "The New York Civil Liberties Union said the department's drone policy isn't restrictive enough to protect the privacy of New York residents." CNN adds, "The NYPD fleet of 14 drones is comprised of 11 small drones for tactical operations and two large weather-resistant drones with features that include thermal imaging capabilities, a powerful zoom camera and 3D mapping, the NYPD said." One drone "can be used for training and testing. 'As the largest municipal police department in the United States, the NYPD must always be willing to leverage the benefits of new and always-improving technology,' NYPD Commissioner James P. O'Neill said in a news release."

Newsday (NY) (12/4, DeStefano) reports, "Some 900 state and local police, fire and emergency agencies around the country already use drone technology and NYPD officials said it was time that the department, after testing drones on NYPD property, started using UAV devices." The drones "will not be equipped with weapons systems and will not be used as a weapon, said officials."

ALSO IN THE NEWS

Massachusetts Police Department's First Two Women Officers Report For Duty.

The Boston Globe (12/4, Laidler) reports, "The first two women police officers in the 121-year history of the Manchester-by-the-Sea Police Department have officially reported for duty." Andrea Locke and Jennifer Gilson "recently graduated from the Municipal Police Training Committee's Reading Police Academy and have joined the department as permanent officers." Locke "was previously a reserve police officer and full-time dispatcher for the police department," while Gilson "was a reserve police officer, part-time dispatcher, and animal control officer for the police department. 'It is no surprise that Officers Locke and Gilson distinguished themselves throughout the recruitment, selection, and training process, as both were exemplary candidates who rose to the top of a very competitive hiring process,' Police Chief Edward Conley said in a statement."

TUESDAY'S LEAD STORIES

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- **Three Convicted In Violent 2106 South Carolina Bank Robbery.**
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